

Spring 2016

# Civil Society in the Arab Spring: Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya

Danielle Meltz

University of Colorado, Boulder, [dame5869@colorado.edu](mailto:dame5869@colorado.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholar.colorado.edu/honr\\_theses](https://scholar.colorado.edu/honr_theses)



Part of the [International and Area Studies Commons](#), and the [International Relations Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Meltz, Danielle, "Civil Society in the Arab Spring: Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya" (2016). *Undergraduate Honors Theses*. 1228.  
[https://scholar.colorado.edu/honr\\_theses/1228](https://scholar.colorado.edu/honr_theses/1228)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Honors Program at CU Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of CU Scholar. For more information, please contact [cuscholaradmin@colorado.edu](mailto:cuscholaradmin@colorado.edu).

**CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ARAB SPRING: TUNISIA, EGYPT AND LIBYA**

By

Danielle Meltz

Dept. of Political Science, University of Colorado, Boulder

Defended March 29, 2016

Thesis Advisor:

Dr. Michael Kanner, Dept. of Political Science

Defense Committee:

Dr. Michael Kanner, Dept. of Political Science

Dr. Janet Donovan, Dept. of Political Science

Daniel Dubois, Dept. of History

## **Abstract**

The emphasis of civil society during a revolution could not have been made clearer when Tunisia's National Dialogue Quartet, a coalition of NGOs, won the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize for the coordination of civil society organizations leading to a peaceful revolution. This research aims to understand the connection between higher levels of civil society, and lower levels of revolutionary violence during a revolution, specifically in the Arab Spring countries of; Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. Moreover, it looks at how the strength of a civil society is limited by the institutions within a state.

## INTRODUCTION

Prior to 2011, the Arab World had been viewed as a region with strict and unchanging governments. When a Tunisian fruit vendor in December of 2010 set himself of fire in protest against his government, the spread of uprisings and protests in the region was unprecedented. The years that followed witnessed an extreme level of protests and citizen demands, unlike anything the Arab world had previously witnessed. With similar time period, culture, geographical region, countries that went through the Arab Spring ended up on four different trajectories.

- 1) Countries in which large-scale peaceful protests lead to major, if not permanent, regime transformation.
- 2) Some countries experienced more limited peaceful contestation which led the leaders to make equally limited political adjustments.
- 3) While others had peaceful protests that were met by violent repression, which led to prolonged fighting between the incumbents of their challengers or foreign intervention.
- 4) Lastly, countries that experienced virtually no contestation and as such practically no regime changes were made.

The theme of this paper is understand why it is some countries experience a more successful revolution than others. Revolutionary violence here is used as a measurement of the successfulness of the revolution. In this case, the dependent variable (revolutionary violence) will be measured against a varying independent variable (civil society). The paper will also look at how the growth of civil society is itself limited by its own state and institutions, such as the laws and military of a state. Earlier this year, Tunisia's National Dialogue Quartet won the Nobel Peace Prize for the coordination of civil society organizations leading to a peaceful transition. This thesis researches the relationship between a strong civil society and less revolutionary violence. The lower levels of conflict in Tunisia, were also met with higher levels of

coordination, and a quicker and more effective transition into a democracy. Therefore, it can be inferred that the level of civil society correlates to the levels of revolutionary violence a country experiences, which is a determining factor in the successfulness of a revolution. The Arab Spring is a highly researched time period, and this paper attempts to contribute to that research by analyzing the importance of civil society. Three in depth case studies will help provide insight to the inverse relationship between civil society and revolutionary violence looking at Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### Revolutions and Democratization

Revolutions are a collective action in which the citizens of a particular country effectively mobilize outside of political institutions to make a fundamental change in political power. They are used as a method of overthrowing a particular government, or fighting for social change, and act differently depending on the country, the time period, the number of people involved, and several other factors (O’Kane, 2013). As Burton argues, revolutions are less likely to result in political change, and more likely to result in widespread violence (Burton, 1978.) In the process of citizens conflicting viewpoints, violence during protests amongst citizens or between citizens and authorities been one of the results.

Various levels of violence can take place during a revolution, and this paper focuses in on the conflict, or lack thereof, experienced by countries that were part of the Arab Spring. It seeks to research why Tunisia was named the *Jasmine Revolution*, while Libya ended in a near civil war. The Arab Spring has been categorized as a new wave of democracy, with countries attempting to overthrow their authoritarian regimes. In the most basic sense, a democracy is a

form of government in which citizens have the right to free and fair elections, and they have basic human rights. This can expand on to include a variety of political, social and economic rights, and society's ability to participate in civil society and social movements (Moghadam, 2013).

The response of revolutionary violence to counter-revolutionary violence from the government is one of the main sources of conflict. In countries with a stable authoritarian regime, counter-revolutionary violence has led to revolutionary violence, as in the case of Latin America (Mayer, 2000). This relationship between revolutions and violence expands beyond the Arab Spring, and can be seen globally. Looking at a history of revolutions, an example of a violent revolution is the French Revolution between 1793-1794, when between 16,000 to 40,000 people were killed. In contrast, nonviolent revolutions such as East Germany in 1989 were named the *Peaceful Revolution* (Nepstad, 2011). This paper seeks to explore whether civil society is the main factor that dictates whether or not a revolution will be violent.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

The term civil society has varied across time and regions, therefore before discussing it in the research, an exploration of the term is essential. Civil society has been known to mean a growth of the middle class, to the middle ground of communication between people and the state. Habermas discussed the idea that civil society allows individuals the opportunity to participate in public affairs while identifying with the common good (Weber, 2013, 513). Civil society as we know it today developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century by a number of political theorists – civil society became known as a domain in society that is separate but equal to the government. A space for citizens to discuss and coordinate their shared interests (Carothers and

Barndt, 18, 1999). In the 1990's, the idea of civil society gained popularity as democracy became more common, and civil society had the space to step in and take action while governments became less restrictive. (Carothers and Barndt, 1999, pg. 18) Civil society encompasses everything beyond the scope of the government, this includes but is not limited to NGOs, labor unions, professional associations, religious association's sports clubs, and social or political organizations. Robert Putnam argued the importance of civil society in his book, *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital*," when he stated that a weak civil society results in a weak civic engagement (Putnam, 1995).

Weber states that civil society rejects ideologies and traditions, allowing individuals to be free of ascribed identities; to which I disagree. In countries that experienced the Arab Spring, often time civil society organizations such as NGO's were forbidden, whereas organizations based on religious values were permitted. In instances such as these where religious organizations are a large part of a country's civil society, their presence cannot be ignored. Putnam argues that even in the U.S. religious communities provide society with support, and contribute to the civil society (Putnam, 2000, 79).

Civil society is a space where individuals can communicate and collaborate. According to Weber, civil society implies and requires a certain attitude to conflict,

"I define civil society as an open public sphere where individuals can institutionalize and thus mediate between different conflicting interests (in particular by making use of voluntary associations)" (Weber, 511, 2013).

The ability of a society to organize aids in building a good and functioning society. Within a society, there are conflicting interests. Social conflict theory, a Marxist-based social theory, argues that individuals in a society have different levels of material and non-material

resources which result in varying degrees of power and exploitation. The stress created between these varying groups in society results in conflict, which in many respects can be mediated through civil society (Weber, 2013, 513). This is where the aspect of the organizations being voluntary is essential, if organizations are forced upon a society and are government controlled, they do not have the same mediating power as those creating from a society organically. Civil society often emerges as a space where individuals can be free to express their interests and mediate conflicts.

While civil society has general similarities globally, the composition of organizations and their capabilities vary by region. Civil society in the Arab World uniquely includes religious organizations, and is limited by institutions of the state such as the laws and military. Various countries in the Arab world, and every country being discussed in this paper, had some type of restrictions on the formation of NGO's or free association. In Tunisia, free association was granted by the constitution, but was restricted for certain types of religious groups. Contrarily, in Libya, every NGO had to be connected in some way to the government. These types of institutional restrictions dictate the growth of civil society, and therefore dictate its effectiveness. Furthermore, during the revolution the military and security forces of a state were strong contributing factors to how a civil society could act.

Even though the Arab Spring has proven to be unsuccessful, the Middle East did gain a new sense of political understanding. The millennials of the Arab world gathered strength and aligned themselves with modern political ideals. The political language of the Arab world has evolved to make democracy, human rights, and civil society in Arabic terms (*dimukratiya*, *huquq al-insan* and *mujtama madani* respectively) all part of common rhetoric, even for the Islamist parties. Middle Eastern governments have often used the power of the government to stay in

power, and have stayed away from democratization or free elections. In a region which has often felt constrained in terms of freedom of association, the Arab Spring is a look at how varying levels of civil society have an effect on the revolutionary process.

## REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE: A MEASUREMENT OF A REVOLUTION'S SUCCESS

Violence has been a factor of revolutions throughout different time periods and regions, making it an interesting dependent variable to measure when looking at the successfulness of a revolution. The term revolutionary violence in particular is being used because it acknowledges the relationship between civil society and the violence created only as a product of the revolution, and not other outside factors. There were a variety of outcomes for countries that went through the Arab Spring. The three countries being analyzed all reached democratic presidential elections, however did so with varying degrees of successfulness and sustainability. One factor of measuring the successfulness of these countries revolutions, is through the amount of internal conflict they experienced from 2011 to 2015. Countries that struggled to reach a democracy, also experienced higher levels of violence during that time period, making the level of internal conflict will be measured as a way to assess the level of difficulty a country had during the Arab Spring, and their success. Internal conflict will be measured through two different quantitative data sets, as well as a qualitative understanding of the conflicts themselves. The first one is an assessment of the number of internal conflicts fought and for what duration, and the second one is an assessment of the intensity of internal conflict.

Internal conflict fought represents the number and duration of conflicts fought within a country, this includes civil, interstate, one-sided and non-state conflicts. The data was conducted by Vision of Humanity, and the internal conflict is scored on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being the

least and 5 being the most. In countries which scored with a scale of 1 there was no internal conflict, and on a scale of 5 was very high levels of internal conflict. The sources used to gather this data include UCDP Battle Related Deaths Dataset, Non-State Conflict Dataset, and the One-Sided Violence Dataset. This indicator is calculated over a five year period, and is two years lagging.

These data sets from Vision of Humanity are an informative way of understanding conflict. It measures the number and duration of conflicts that occur within a country’s legal borders (Vision of Humanity). The degree of internal conflicts fought include a variety of different factors including the conflicts fought amongst citizens and between citizens and security forces. This gives a holistic understanding of the conflict starting from the year before the Arab Spring to the most recent data. Furthermore, this information has been used in comparison to other data sets such as Polity IV, due to their incompleteness of information during the Arab Spring.

#### Internal conflicts fought<sup>1</sup>

Country	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Tunisia	2	2	3	3	3	3
Egypt	2	4	4	4	4	4
Libya	2	3	4	4	4	4

This data set shows how in 2010 prior to the Arab Spring, all three countries faced the same levels of internal conflict. In 2011, the first year of the Arab Spring Tunisia saw no

---

<sup>1</sup> Vision of Humanity, Internal Conflicts Fought data

increase in conflict, while Egypt and Libya did. All countries between 2010 and 2015 saw an increase in internal conflict, and Egypt and Libya witnessed the largest increases.

The Intensity of Internal Conflicts adds to our understanding of the conflict as it uses a quantitative assessment and turns it into a quantitative assessment of the intensity of conflicts within a country. The data operates on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning that there was no organized conflict within the country, and 5 meaning that there was severe internal crisis, civil war, violent force used within a certain continuity in an organized and systematic way throughout the country.

#### Intensity of Internal Conflicts<sup>2</sup>

Country	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Tunisia	2	3	3	4	4	3
Egypt	2	3	3	4	4	2
Libya	2	5	5	3	4	5

This data set again begins in 2010 with each country at the same levels of intensity of internal conflicts. Libya is the not only the one country that reaches the most intense level of conflict, but does so for 3 of out of the 6 years of the Arab Spring. A qualitative explanation of these conflicts will be discussed in the case studies of this paper.

From the data, it can be seen that Libya suffered the most number of internal conflicts, with the highest intensity from the time periods of 2011-2015. The year 2010, which was before any of the uprisings took place, is used as a reference point. All three of the countries in both sets of data had the same amount of internal conflict before the Arab Spring. In this respect, one can

---

<sup>2</sup> Vision of Humanity, Intensity of Internal Conflicts data

analyze the revolutionary violence assuming all other forms of conflict remained constant. This brings us to the discussion of what effect civil society has on a country's ability to perform a successful revolution.

In order to better compare the different levels of civil society to the levels of internal conflict, the following table has been created to represent where each country falls on a civil society scale.

- 1- No form of organizations or free association
- 2- Organizations as an extension of the government
- 3- Free association separate from the government but limited in capacity and size (such as restricting religious organizations, being monitored by the government, and seemingly arbitrary organization restrictions)
- 4- A developed civil society met with restraints (such as restricting religious organizations)
- 5- Vibrant and active civil society amongst different ages and sectors of society

The following table categorizes the three case studies civil societies prior to the Arab Spring.

Country	Civil Society ranking
Tunisia	4
Egypt	3
Libya	2

This data set shows how Tunisia had the most developed civil society of the three countries as it was granted freedom of association in the Constitution and was a vibrant part of society of different sectors and age groups; however, religious organizations faced restrictions. Anyone or any organization that was part of the Islamist party, *Ennahda*, was banned by the former president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Egypt was also granted freedom of association, however in order to form an organization citizens had many more obstacles and restrictions to follow. Egypt's law of 84/2002 required all NGO's to obtain permission from the Ministry of Social Solidarity before registration, which was inconsistent with their international obligation to

respect the right to freedom of association. And Libya had the lowest level of civil society, while organizations existed they were all an extension of the government, which by the definition reached earlier does not constitute as a civil society.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In order to research the relationship between civil society and revolutionary violence, a selection of case studies was used. There is an increasing recognition to the value of qualitative research, particularly in the form of case studies (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, Murphy, 2012). Multiple case studies allow for comparisons which can be particularly useful in the absence of quantitative data. Lincoln and Guba argued that qualitative research has its benefits but it must be conducted with rigor and be; credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, Murphy, 2012). These criteria are met through the use of multiple sources of data, and a broader more global explanation of the findings. Robert Yin advocates for case studies in times where a researcher is attempting to explore and explain events, such as the impact of civil society (Johnson, Joslyn, Reynolds, 2001) The use of multiple case studies are also more likely to have explanatory power than a single case study, as it allows the researcher to test a theory multiple times. Furthermore, the lack of quantitative data on civil society gives reason to the use of qualitative research. It is for these reasons that in order to uncover the relationship between civil society and revolutionary violence, I chose a selection of case studies.

A measurement of civil society is particularly difficult in the Middle East, where certain aspects of civil society have been banned in a multitude of countries, as discussed in the previous literature review. In this case, the case studies provide the advantage of an analysis involving qualitative variables, as well as historical and social context. The revolutionary violence of each

country has been analyzed through quantitative data involving the number of conflicts, their duration, and how intense they were. In the absence of quantitative data for both variables, a case study analysis will help provide insight to the inverse relationship between civil society and revolutionary violence.

The countries chosen for case studies all experienced a revolution during the Arab Spring to account for a similar time period, culture, geographical region, and historical context, while allowing for a variance of the independent variable. By controlling for political instability, resistance, as discussed below, the three countries which start the Arab Spring off in a similar place are; Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.

## **CASE STUDY SELECTION:**

### **CONTROLLING FOR POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND MEDIA**

Political instability and social media are the two control variables in this case study research. In order to choose a selection of case studies that would aid in explaining the connection between civil society and revolutionary violence experienced during a revolution the article, *The Arab Spring: A Quantitative Analysis*, by Andrey V. Korotayev, Leonid M. Issaev, Sergey Yu. Malkov and Alisa R. Shishkina, was useful in choosing countries that experienced the same level of political instability. This is an important factor when researching civil society's impact on revolutionary violence; if the cases being researched had varying levels of political instability (one was much more instable and easier to overthrow) than the others, then there would be a clear determining variable related to the levels of revolutionary violence.

The data being used analyzes the political instability of countries in the Arab Spring through the use of multiple indicators such as; conflict potential index, social instability, the

ability of the government to reduce social tension, as well as the country's immunity to revolutionary violence. The authors of this article used nonlinear regression method to measure the level of political instability (IUNST) and the resistance index of the country (Korotayev, Issaey, Malkov, Sergey, Shishkina, 2014, 158).

Country	IUNST	Resistance Index
Tunisia	37.61	1
Egypt	50.43	1
Libya	54.72	1
Yemen	15.2	2
Syria	29.05	2
Bahrain	17.8	2
Morocco	11.88	3
Jordan	15.06	3
Algeria	6.55	4
Lebanon	3.66	4
Kuwait	7.07	4
Oman	4.58	5
Saudi Arabia	5.62	6
Qatar	2.2	7
UAE	2.62	7

This data shows the varying degrees of political instability in the Arab world. The three countries with a political instability of 1, represent the most politically instable countries. Whereas on the opposite end of the spectrum, there were hardly any protests in Qatar or the UAE. Similarly, there were a few protests in Saudi Arabia, after which the government illegally doled out \$130 billion in financial benefits, and reminded Saudis that demonstrations are not only illegal but also un-Islamic (The National, 2011).

From this data, the three countries with a resistance index of 1 were chosen as case studies. A resistance index of 1 is defined by the study as ‘extremely low resistance: a successful revolution,’ however it is important to acknowledge that this index is used in comparison with other Arab spring countries. Within Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, successfulness of transition was met with varying degrees of violence throughout a variety of time periods, which leads to the question of what other factors were involved. Furthermore, due to their geographical, economic, and cultural similarities, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, are the three countries often used in research regarding the Arab Spring.

## MEDIA

One of the attributes towards Tunisia’s success in the Arab Spring has been its media usage, particularly in the beginning of the uprisings. A brief look at the media usage of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya will show that this is in fact not the case. The Arab Spring began when a fruit vendor in Sidi Bousaid set himself on fire in the form of a protest against the government. This action was filmed by one of his family members, and the video went viral. While media played a large role kick-starting the Arab Spring, it did not play as large of a role in the years to follow. Especially when looking at a comparison between the three countries. Tunisia had one of the

most developed internet systems of the country’s going through the Arab spring. However, the Tunisian government has large amounts of control and censorship over web content, and was filtering through what people were posting onto social media and deleting certain posts. The government imprisoned bloggers for writing about what was happening during the uprisings.

In Egypt, the government’s response to the initial uprisings was to control communication flow through the internet. On 25 January 2011, the State Security Investigations Service ordered Twitter to be blocked. The following day twitter was shut down, and on the night following, the government shut down the internet and text messaging. The government tried to control all information that traveled across the country through the internet (BBC, 2011). Many Egyptians who were then disconnected from the internet took to the streets to find out what was happening; it is argued that the internet shut down could have been counter intuitive as this was the process through which many citizens joined the protest. On 2 February 2011 the internet was turned back on. If media was the main attributer to Tunisia successfully going through the Arab Spring, one would expect higher levels of media usage in Tunisia when compared with Egypt. However, the following two data sets from the researchers Lotan, Graeff, Ananny, Gaffney, Pearce and Boyd, depict almost identical numbers in terms of the number of tweets posted and the number of actors involved.

Actor Type	Average # Responses per Tweet	Average # Responses per Tweet (for tweets with responses)	Total # Tweets across threads	Total # times tweets had responses across threads	Tweets/Tweet responses	Total number of actors
MSM	14.32	16.15	53	47	0.8868	13
Web News Org	12.06	17.65	79	54	0.6835	14
Non Media Org	12.86	28.30	66	30	0.4545	13
Bot	0.23	2.36	223	22	0.0987	60
Journalist	11.49	22.73	182	92	0.5055	51
Blogger	8.23	21.89	303	114	0.3762	90
Activist	4.20	11.04	271	103	0.3801	58
Digerati	9.21	10.75	14	12	0.8571	6
Political Actor	39.71	55.60	7	5	0.7143	4
Researcher	6.29	15.10	24	10	0.4167	8
Celeb	21.28	63.83	18	6	0.3333	3
Other	6.91	22.75	349	106	0.3037	116

Figure. Chart of Flow Dynamics by Single Actor Types, Tunisia Dataset

Actor Type	Average # Responses per Tweet	Average # responses per tweet (for tweets with responses)	Total Tweets across threads	Total times tweets had responses across threads	Tweets/Tweet responses	Total number of actors
MSM	28.75	32.86	64	56	0.8750	15
Web News Org	13.89	21.90	82	52	0.6341	12
Non Media Org	26.82	43.04	90	54	0.6000	16
Bot	1.68	4.06	114	47	0.4123	36
Journalist	12.58	20.86	423	255	0.6028	71
Blogger	3.72	8.54	693	302	0.4358	111
Activist	7.14	17.94	706	281	0.3980	89
Digerati	4.47	5.63	34	27	0.7941	8
Political Actor	21.54	35.00	13	8	0.6154	5
Researcher	8.93	24.00	43	16	0.3721	15
Celeb	14.45	30.42	40	19	0.4750	7
Other	9.05	27.58	789	259	0.3283	157

Figure. Chart of Flow Dynamics by Single Actor Types, Egypt Dataset

Libya also faced an internet shut down, it was turned on and off for a few days after the initial protests in an effort to prevent the violent protests from spreading (Howard, Agarwal and Hussain, 2011). It has been argued that the impact of the internet shutdown was less severe than in Egypt, primarily because fewer Libyans had prior internet access. However, those who did have access were the elite, and who could have had potentially more influence in the revolution (Wollman, 2011).

Looking at the media usage in all three countries, it is clear that while media acts as a form of communication, because the media usage did not differ heavily amongst the three countries it was not the main factor behind Tunisia's successful revolution. Media can act as a catalyst for action, but only if that momentum exists already. There must already be an incentive to perform political action, and the means to access media for media to play any role at all.

## THEORY

### FUNCTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The two main factors of civil society that will be analyzed when looking at the three case studies are;

- 1) Ability to join an organization
- 2) Collaboration between organizations.

The choice of these two factors draws on other researcher's models for analyzing a civil society, such as *Merkel and Lauth's function model*, as well as *Edward's roles model*. Both models have more functions of civil society listed which are beneficial when looking at it from a global perspective; however from the Middle Eastern perspective of civil society not all of them apply. For example, the first essential function of civil society in Merkel and Lauth's model is protection.

“Civil society is the social sphere beyond the state in which citizens, endowed with rights, are free to organize their lives without state interference. The state has to ensure protection of the private sphere. The task of civil society is to remind the state of this warrant and, if needed, compel the state to honor it” (Paffenholz, 21, 2010).

In two of the case study countries, Egypt and Libya, organizations had to give the government advanced notice of their meetings, government officials were allowed to sit in on them, and organizations were sometimes requested to send meeting minutes to the government. It is functions such as this one that do not fit in with the definition of a Middle Eastern civil society, and it is for this reason that a broader two-function approach has been chosen.

The ability to join an organization is the first step to participating and impacting the surrounding society. This action of participating as an active member of society feeds into the concept of one of the most basic functions of a democracy: that the power is left upon the people who rule their elected representatives through free elections. Engaging in the society around you extends the participatory need past the action of voting. Participatory action in order to create change is a function of being a part of an organization and a democracy (Merkel and Lauth, 1998). Moreover, a core function of democracy beyond citizen participation is decision-making ability. When people choose to participate in civil society they are acting as citizens capable of influencing their society. They begin to practice developing the community around them. This expansion of civic participation, practice with decision-making, and holding people and organizations accountable, are all attributing factors to a well-functioning democracy (Paffenholz, 2010). Ability to joining an organization provides access to practicing these skills, making citizens more equip to live in a democracy. In this way, ability to joining an organization is the first function of civil society that will be analyzed throughout the case studies.

Secondly, after an individual has ability to join an organization, a strong civil society is built through effective communication amongst organizations. This function of effective communication is invaluable to the theory of lessening conflict during a revolution, as Linz and Stepan (1998) argued, an active civil society is invaluable the democratization process. As Nos and Pinazo (2013, 344) argued that a strong civil society is necessary for a peaceful political transition. Communication amongst organizations prioritizes a free public sphere where citizens can participate. This can happen in person, as in protests that have taken place, or through the internet through forms such as social media. It provides individuals the space to communicate their concerns and thoughts, and allow them to transition those into action (Merkel and Lauth,

1998). This creation of the public sphere is essential in building trust and the practice of decision-making, which are essential functions not only to a democracy, but also of the transition to a democracy (Edwards, 2004). The better the communication amongst organizations across a state, the more organized it is as it tries to overturn one of the most powerful forces in a state, its government.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY'S RELATION TO REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE

As discussed in the previous section, Nos and Pinazo argued that a strong civil society is necessary for a peaceful transition. They argued that the communicative role of civil society's participation is important in the transformative political peaceful actions. Revolutionary violence in a country greatly impacts a society's ability to function, collaborate, and operate in solidarity. This creates a spiral effect which happens between conflict and civil society; conflict has a detrimental impact on civil society, which in turn creates more conflict. The three main way this happens is through a disruption of communication, changes in state security, and a loss of trust.

One of the pillars of a strong civil society is its ability to communicate, which currently often happens through the internet. At the start of the Arab Spring when protests were starting, governments would block the internet in an attempt to control the demonstrations. Media played such a strong role in the Arab Spring because of how it allowed individuals and organizations access to other civil society groups (Paffenholz, 2010, 18). Technology has had dramatic implications on a society's ability to communicate within itself, and taking that away from a society prevents it from being able to coordinate and collaborate (Weidmann, 2015, 263). Considering that a strong civil society leads to less violence, a weakening of a country's civil society by the state makes violence more likely. As Nos and Pinazo (2013, 344) argued, a strong

civil society facilitates peaceful political transitions due to its ability to keep a society engaged and aware of unjust effects. Previously in this paper, it was discussed how important a society's ability to collaborate is in order to form a civil society. If a society cannot communicate, it is limited in its ability to collaborate, which leads to higher levels of conflict.

An increase in security forces acts as an outside factor that also impacts the connection between civil society and levels of conflict is the use of security forces. During a revolution the increase of civic participation such as protests tends to shift the levels of security to either be higher or lower. In this case, the dependent variable (revolutionary violence) has an impact on the independent variable (civil society) with the addition of an outside factor (the military). In some cases, such as the situations in Egypt and Libya, the eruption of protests lead to an increase in military force leading to an increase in conflict. The discussion of Egypt's and Libya's increase of military power and the implications of it will be discussed in their case studies, however it is necessary to acknowledge the connection between the shift in security forces which leads to the increase in violence. The theory of this paper, is that if a country's civil society was strong enough to coordinate large and civil protests, that the use of excessive military violence would have been unnecessary. However, future research might aid in understanding the military's influence over civil society.

Civil society plays an important role in mediating violence during revolutions, due to the higher levels of communication and trust associated with it. Trust in this sense refers to political trust, a trust in the citizens around you as well as your government. Trust develops in cases of strong civil society's, which fosters enhanced communication, and further collaboration in times of conflict. However, in cases where the trust amongst a society is already weak and conflict takes place, trust within a society begins to erode (Paffenholz, 2010, 18). This effect can lead

people to separate themselves from other forms of interaction, which limits one of the main functions of civil society - ability to collaborate between organizations (Paffenholz, 2010, 19). Moving forward in the analysis the relationship between civil society and revolutionary violence of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, will be analyzed with the two functions of civil society: ability to join an organization and collaboration amongst organizations.

## CASE STUDIES

The uprisings that spread through the Arab World carried with it the drive for citizens to change their way of life, and their government. Citizens demanded a variety of changes, including more freedom and democracy. However, the opportunity for someone new to be in power resulted in a clash of interests. Different visions were being developed of what the new government should look like. In cases where countries had a strong civil society, such as Tunisia, mass groups of protestors were able to coordinate and come up with specific goals for their government. In Egypt, its organizations were split up by their differences, making it harder to achieve a specific set of goals. In other cases, such as Libya, the disjointedness of the public's needs has resulted in higher levels of conflict and a longer period of a scramble towards democracy. From here, the research will be a qualitative assessment of the civil society's ability to mediate conflict and aid in a country's revolutionary process.

### TUNISIA

No one could have guessed that the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, a fruit vendor in Sidi Bouzid, would have been the beginning of a slew of uprisings and revolutions across the Arab World. On 17 December 2010, Mohamed, a fruit vendor in his hometown had his products

confiscated and faced harassment by a municipal official. Mohamed's cousin filmed what happened next, and the video went viral – the catalyst to the Arab Spring (El-Khawas, 2012, 9). A few days later on 22 December 2010, another man in the same town killed himself during a demonstration, which sparked other violent acts in neighboring towns as protestors tried to set police cars on fire, and police fired on protestors in response (El-Khawas, 2012, 10). Conflict between police and protestors continued, as police used force to disperse rallies, and security forces prevented labor unions from holding a rally. When protestors gathered in front of the Ministry of the Interior, they were split up by tear gas. This caused the Democratic Progressive Party (PDP) to call on the government, and ask them to focus on communication instead of violence (El-Khawas, 2012, 10).

Trade unions held a huge rally demanding that Ben Ali step down, and protests continued across the country. A couple weeks after the first protest on 14 January 2011, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali stepped down and fled to Saudi Arabia, after 23 years in power. Police disappeared from the streets after Ben Ali stepped down, which led to gangs that set buildings on fire and mugged people. In response, neighborhoods formed groups to patrol the streets and keep their houses and neighbors safe. Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi began to replace all of the Constitutional Democratic Rally members of the government, and after further protests he too resigned. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, Beji Caid Essebsi became Prime Minister, and on 3 March 2011 the Islamist *Ennahda* party won the majority of seats in the elections for the Constituent Assembly.

For most countries which went through the Arab Spring, their results were disappointing, either resulting in no transition at all or long periods of violence. The transition to democracy in Tunisia experienced the least amount of violence as compared to the other two case studies, and

was called the ‘Jasmine Revolution’ because of it. Tunisia experienced a low level of revolutionary violence throughout its revolution. It was the only country that did not see an increase in deaths, but it did experience an increase of conflict between the time period between 2010 and 2015. Violence in Tunisia came in the form of more self-immolations, assassinations, and clashes between protests and the police (Saidani and Judy, 2012). Anti-government protests took place across the country in 2013, and when the Prime Minister, Ali Larayedh, announced a general election, they turned into violent protests over a week. The UGTT stepped in to mediate the situation and held crisis talks overnight before it issued a statement calling for the complete dissolution of the government (Africa Research Bulletin, 2013).

In 2015, Tunisia’s National Dialogue Quartet won the Nobel Peace Prize for its help in the peaceful transition to democracy through the Jasmine Revolution. The Tunisian National Dialogue Quarter is a coalition of civil society groups that came together in the summer of 2013, when Tunisia, the leader of the Arab Spring was faced between a future of either further violence or a democracy. The quartet designed a plan to move Tunisia away from the path of violence other countries were on, and was comprised of four organizations from Tunisia’s civil society: The Tunisian General Labor Union, The Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts, The Tunisian Human Rights League, and The Tunisian Order of Lawyers. The Quartet was successful in calling for negotiations between political parties currently in power and the opposition. This organization of civil societies clearly represents the impact civil society can have in aiding successful revolutions, as well as mediating interests and preventing revolutionary violence. In order to fully comprehend the full power of civil society in Tunisia, there needs to be a closer look at the time period of when the revolution started, and when the quartets plan was implemented.

The primary characteristic of a strong civil society is the freedom and ability to join an organization. The enforcement of these laws created an environment in which certain groups such as student groups, workers, journalists, and other associations were repressed (Global Trends in NGO Law). The biggest barrier to entry for an organization during the Ben Ali regime was its religious affiliation because Islamist organizations were not allowed to exist. The ability to join an organization is only as beneficial as the freedom allowed once the organization has been created. With regards to Tunisia's specific NGO Laws, its Constitution provided freedom to association and assembly and dictates that these rights will only be confined in order to protect the rights of others or to respect public order. Tunisia's Law on Associations (under law 154 of 1959 as amended) allowed two or more persons to found an association and carry out procedures on a permanent basis, as long as that they were not a business and did not run a profit. That being said, this only pertains to certain types of organizations such as sports, women's, scientific, cultural, etc. Democracy and human rights organizations were not allowed and had often been denied registration. When all the documents have been filed, the Ministry has to provide a receipt, and there is no length of time dictated for this process. NGO's in Tunisia have reported that the government would routinely withhold requests. The Law on Associations permitted the Minister of the Interior to disapprove of an application if its goals might lead to disruption of public order. Since many of the laws are vague, the Ministry held a lot of power in terms of denying organizations the ability to register. Tunisia's NGOs also experienced excessive government supervision of NGO operations such as home and office-break ins, monitoring emails, tapping phone lines, being denied the ability to hold meetings (The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law). The Secular civil society in Tunisia contained processes that resembled democratic behaviors. Tunisian organizations were allowed to freely run for organization

elections, unlike Egypt where the government was allowed to remove candidates running for elected positions. They also had freedom in event plan which aids in sustainability (Martin, 2015).

While Tunisia faced certain restrictions in people's ability to join and create organizations, it has experienced a strong history of coordination among organizations. One organization in particular that helped bring together Tunisia's civil society was the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT). Beginning in 2007, issue-based demonstrations were organized by labor movements (Kudlenko, 2015, 172). The UGTT was also responsible for the trade union strikes in Gafsa in 2008 and in Sfax in 2010, which were a collaboration of people from different sectors of society (Deane, 2013, 13). The organization has had a long history of challenging the government, and consequently being repressed by it. With around 520,000 members, the UGTT is Tunisia's largest civil society organization, and has always connected social needs with political demands by acting outside of the political system. During the early period of the uprisings in 2010, UGTT decided to stay out of the conflict and act as a mediator between the state and the protests, however it quickly changed its strategy and worker unions around the country began supporting the movement. Similarly, the Bar Association is an organization that has played a role in Tunisia's revolution since the beginning, and in 2011 called upon its members to stage national protests. Unions are a strong part of Tunisia's civil society, with organizations such as the Secondary School Teachers' Union (*Syndicat National des Enseignements SNES*), the Primary School Teacher's Union, the Health Workers Union, and the Postal Workers Union. The UGTT lead the largest demonstration on January 14th 2011, when hundreds of thousands of citizens partook in a national protest, and marched towards the president from all regions of the country. The diversity in protestors made the momentum

difficult to control, with people ranging from high school to elders, lawyers, women, businessmen, and members of Tunisia's labor federation (Angrist, 2013). These demonstrations and actions involving Tunisian's from multiple sectors of society emphasize the ability of Tunisia's civil society to coordinate.

Conflict in Tunisia role an incremental amount during the course of the Arab Spring, however it did not lead to an increase in death or other forms of crime such as looting. One aspect to take into consideration is the role the military played throughout this process. The Tunisian military has always been separate from the government. It is a small military in comparison to the rest of the militaries in the Arab world, and has never posed a major threat to the regime. Tunisia's first leader, Habib Bourguiba, ensured that the military did not play a political role (Lutterbeck, 34, 2013). The government has made an effort to separate the military from political issues by forbidding any political activity, and removing officers with political agendas. The military is the smallest in North Africa; in comparison to Libya, Tunisia has double the population of Libya but half the military size. The Tunisian army showed an openness to the pro-reform movements of 2010, and the General Rachid Ammar restricted his men from shooting at the protestors, as well as informed the police that he would retaliate if they began firing at the protestors (Lutterbeck, 34, 2013). The Tunisian army did not play a large role attacking the protestors or the regime during the revolution, however it did seem inclined to support the revolution. With regards to the role the Tunisian military played during the revolution, it was not a large force of conflict and predominately stayed out of the way during the uprisings.

The impact of a strong civil society on a less violent transition can be seen through the increased forms of communication and the low levels of conflict seen throughout the country.

Many of the unions, such as the UGTT, had such a large presence throughout the entire country that it was able to play the role of mediator across various cities and sectors of society. It played an important role in getting the revolution started, but an equally as important role in keeping Tunisia on the right track. The Quartet, which won the Nobel Peace Prize for its work, was a mix of civil society groups whose leaders became mediators throughout the revolution. Tunisia and Egypt were on similar paths of increasing conflict before the Quartet was formed in 2013. In reference to the Intensity of Internal Conflict table discussed earlier, Tunisia and Egypt were both at a level 3 intensity at 2012, and while Tunisia's stayed constant in 2013, Egypt's increased to a level 4. The ability of Tunisia's strong civil society to communicate with large numbers of people across the country facilitated the dialogue between the protestors and the government.

## EGYPT

Soon after the uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt followed suit. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, and the 18 days that followed, protests erupted involving tens of thousands of citizens. In an attempt to control the protests, the government shut off the country's internet access. By the end of January the U.S. embassy began a voluntary evacuation as violence escalated. The President, Hosni Mubarak, appointed a Vice President for the first time in 30 years, and on February 10<sup>th</sup>, Mubarak handed off all power to the newly appointed Vice President. Protests continued, the military dissolved the Egyptian Parliament, and violent protests continued till the end of 2011. The first democratically elected President, Mohamed Morsi, and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2012 new protests erupted. The military overthrew the government on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2013. The military cracked down on the Muslim Brotherhood by jailing and killing many of the supporters, many activists from the protests have been sentenced to life. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, previously head of the Egyptian Armed Forces was voted into the Presidential role on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2014.

Hosni Mubarak and his former interior minister were sentenced to life in prison for their failure to stop the killings during the first six days of the revolution.

Mass protests took place in Tahrir Square, resulting in 846 deaths and a forceful response from the riot police. Using tear gas in Tahrir square, the police forced the protests to reform at night. This action fueled the protestors, leading to the “Friday of Anger.” Egyptians who were claim that it was the turning point of the revolution (Brownlee, Masoud, Reynolds, 2015). With protests as large as they were, the police retreated and the army moved in. Mubarak installed a security cabinet of men to aid in the militaries management of the protests. Mubarak made a television announcement stating that he would not run for another term or pass on the presidential role to his son, but he did not step down. The following day, the “Battle of the Camel,” occurred, when men on horses and camels hired by two of Egypt’s Members of Parliament came in and attacked demonstrators (Fathi, 2012). Regime agents sniped at demonstrators from rooftops while protestors formed barricades and shields. The battle left over a thousand wounded and 11 dead. The following day, “Friday of Departure,” involved peaceful protests of over a hundred thousand people (Brownlee, Masoud, Reynolds, 2015).

As with most countries in the Arab world, freedom to organize in Egypt was restricted. NGOs in Egypt had to register and acquire a license through, which monitors their activities and budgets by the restrictive Law on Community Associations and Foundations – Law 84 of 2002 (Beinin, 2014). The law prohibits political activity, extra approval was required to affiliate with a foreign organization. The Ministry had to approve transfer of funds from Egyptians abroad. The Ministry has been critiqued for rejecting licenses for overly vague reasons, a mark of excessive government discretion which is a primary barrier to Egypt being able to build a strong civil society. Islamist organizations, such as the Muslim Brotherhood which was established in 1928,

acts as a religious, social and political organization that has not faced many barriers. The Muslim Brotherhood has achieved a level of influence previously unimaginable, which shows the power of the freedom to organize and collaborate (Wickham, 2015). The Muslim Brotherhood launched a political party and won almost half of the seats in the 2011-2012 parliamentary elections, and their candidate Mohamed Morsi won the 2012 Presidential election. The role of free access to civil society is evident here – Morsi was not representative of the society’s demands. During his Presidency, he announced that being President was above the law and was not subject to judicial review. He also suddenly announced massive tax increases, as well as gas and water shortages. He was overthrown within a year by mass protests (Goldman, 2013). The success of a singular unrestricted organization emphasizes the power of freedom of association, and illustrates why free and equal access to civil society is necessary for the democratization process. In a closer look at Egypt’s NGO laws prior to the Arab Spring, many of which are still being applied such as the Constitution granting freedom to association. A minimum of 10 individuals is needed to register to be an association, in comparison to 2 in Tunisia. After all the paperwork had been submitted, the Ministry of Solidarity Articles had a deadline of 60 days to approve or reject the organization, and if the 60 days had passed with no decision then the organization would be automatically approved. However, there have been reports of the Ministry has often failed to meet the default regulation caused by the 60 days. Associations must submit a list of all the candidates running for their board of directors to the Ministry, after which the Ministry is then allowed to remove any of the candidates for not fulfilling the nomination requirements, even though no such requirements exist within the laws. Egyptian officials are also granted permission to intervene in the normal operations of NGO’s. NGO’s are required to send a list of meeting dates including meeting agendas, and The General Federation is allowed to send a representative

to that meeting and the following one. Minutes of the meeting are required to be sent back to the Ministry. In comparison to the previous case study on Tunisia, Egypt's associations face many more obstacles in terms of registering an organization, and there is much more government observance once an association has started (The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law).

Analyzing the second function of civil society, Egypt had weak collaboration amongst organizations due to two main reasons;

- 1) A lack of organizations
- 2) Conflict between existing organizations

The lack of collaboration between organizations was due in large part to the lack of organizations themselves. This lack of diversity in Egypt's civil society played into the country's difficult and violent transition into a democracy. Egypt held a relatively weak civil society, mainly dominated by Islamic institutions which gave them leverage during the revolution and democratic elections. This contrasts with Tunisia's relatively strong civil society, with a strong secular base of a variety of organizations. Secondly, organizations that did exist in Egypt experienced conflict with each other. Islamic NGO's condemned civil society for being un-Islamic, and women's organizations and human rights groups have been attacked for their identification with these Western concepts (Rahman, 2002, 32).

Egypt's civil society faced restrictions in terms of individual's ability to join an organization, as well as difficulty communicating amongst organizations. These restrictions resulted in various forms of conflict, mainly between protestors resulting in 6,000 injuries, but also towards security forces such as the burning of police stations. There was violence between the supporters and proponents of Mubarak, as well as against journalists. These restrictions to form a collaborative civil society can be shown by how even the Egyptian military was split

during the revolution. The Egyptian military, in contrast to Tunisia's, has been a powerful force in the Middle East. According to the Egyptian citizens, it is the most well respected institution in the country (Stier, 2011). The Egyptian military can be described by the term 'praetorian state,' coined by Amos Perlmutter, in which the military tends to intervene and has the potential to dominate the executive' (Lutterbeck, 33, 2013). Mubarak formed an early relationship with the military by granting it access to land and business deals. The military has always been a key pillar within the Egyptian political system, and until the Arab Spring, Presidents of Egypt mainly came from the military. It also has had a foothold in the economic sector of Egypt in industries such as electronics, infrastructure, and consumer goods. The role of the military during the revolution was ambiguous, it supported the protestors while being on the side of the regime (Lutterbeck, 38, 2013). The military arbitrarily arrested and even tortured demonstrators, however it ultimately also forced Mubarak to step down. In comparison to Tunisia's military, the Egyptian military partially resisted pro-reform movements; it was more bound to the regime however it did not directly oppose or support it during the revolution. Looking at how the Egyptian military stood on both sides of the revolution, it was a source of conflict.

Egypt's fight for democracy continued until 2014 – three years after the first protests emerged. The protests erupted in waves, with two separate presidential elections. The country stood divided between groups from the Islamist, liberal, anti-capitalist, nationalist, and feminist perspectives. Unable to determine their goals and stand behind a specific presidential candidate early on, a military coup took place in order to take control. While a civil society of some form existed in Egypt, the barriers to entry created by The Ministry of Social Solidarity and Justice, and the lack of collaboration between organizations, resulted in an ineffective move towards

democracy. This lack of civil society resulted in a lack of collaboration and violent protests, which led to a more challenging revolution and transition to democracy.

## LIBYA

Libya provides a viewpoint from the opposite side of the spectrum of Tunisia. After the Arab Spring movements in Tunisia, Libya experienced a full-scale revolt which began on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2011. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February, unrest had centered itself in Tripoli. Violence in the country continued to rise, as powers such as France, the UN Security Council, and the U.S. stepped in. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, Gadhafi was captured and killed in the city of Sirte.

Prior to 2011 in Libya, civil society was virtually non-existent under the rule of Muammar Gaddafi. Since civil society is such a vital part to a democracy, the level of civil society was so low that outsiders feared even with the fall of Gadhafi, that it would be extremely difficult to build a viable government. Freedom of the press, trade unions, and political opposition, were all banned under the law (Petré, 2014). The Libyan Constitution contains no guarantee of a right to association. Individuals were only allowed to join an institution run by the government, such as the National Trade Unions' Federation, under Law 71 of 1972. Libya has been compared to Saudi Arabia, in the way that it had the most extreme and restrictive NGO laws in the Middle East. When other countries that participated in the Arab Spring began to revolt, Libya had catch up work to do in terms of understanding their collective interests and organizing around them. This need for civil society in Libya has been acknowledged, by Charles Dunne for example, the Director of Middle East and North Africa programs at Freedom House, when he stated that while the revolution has created a time of crisis in Libya, it has been a positive opportunity for the emergence of civil society (Petré, 2014).

The ability of each citizen to join an organization of his or her choosing, without government intervention is part of the backbone of civil society. However, during Gadhafi's time as president he outlawed political parties, nongovernmental organizations, and free media. It was only in the last decade of his rule that he allowed the emergence of government organized NGO's and quasi free media all in the form of top-down reform agenda set up by his son, Seif Al-Islam. Libyans had no true experience with forming NGO's or civil society (Dunne, 2011). Yet another obstacle they had to handle, is the lack of human development. Gadhafi imposed international isolation on the country, and failed to invest adequately in education, resulting in low levels of human development, an essential component to building a civil society. In terms of developing a civil society, government control and human development go hand in hand, and in this case where they were both restricted, Libya was left with low levels of civil society and an incapability of rebuilding a democratic government.

The second key aspect of civil society, collaboration, is virtually missing from Libya's growing civil society. Organizations lacked the ability to communicate amongst themselves, and within government officials. In 2014, organizations relating to women's rights, education, and good governance were being created, however even though they operated underground it was very dangerous, in particular for the women (Petré, 2014). Furthermore, there was a lack of collaboration within the government. The weak police and military forces face difficult controlling the militia groups fighting for power. At the same time, there are two governments also in search of more power. The number of groups fighting for different goals and power magnifies the country's inability to collaborate and discuss solutions for their new government. The violence Libya experienced was in large part due to the citizen's lack of ability to collaborate.

Libya experienced one of the highest levels of revolutionary violence through the Arab Spring, with the protests evolving into a civil war extremely quickly. Police stations were burned, military forces were deployed in force, and at least one helicopter sprayed fire onto peaceful protestors (Shadid, 2011). Violence was used by protestors and of the government. As shown in the internal conflict data discussed earlier, the level of violence in Libya rose dramatically in 2011. Large protests and violence existed in the beginning of both the Tunisian and Libyan uprisings, however when the two countries began to try and organize, Libya's low level of civil society acted as its limiting factor. This high level of violence continued onto 2012, and the government has yet to reach a level of stability similar to Tunisia or Egypt. A large section of Libya's violence stems from the fight for power by the Muslim Brotherhood, tribal loyalties, and militia groups, all of whom attempt to impose their power into the political scene (Mel, 2013). The government's lack of security highlights their lack of control in their own country. In October 2013, the Libyan Prime Minister was kidnapped and held in the Ministry of the Interior by Libyan Revolutionaries, Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Libyan Shield Brigades along with other militias (Mel, 2013). Similarly, residences of Libyan governments and other government officials had been kidnapped. Apart from the capitol, cities such as Misratah and Zintan experienced sustained fighting throughout 2011.

Another source of conflict for Libya is the lack of strong military force. Unlike Tunisia and Egypt, the military is not an autonomous institution, instead it is part of the ruling regime. The military is very connected to the government through personal relations, such as Qaddafi's sons heading important military units. In comparison to Tunisia, which has one of if not the most apolitical military in the Middle East, Libya is on the other end and has one of the most political militaries. The personal connection between Qaddafi and the military continues through the

security forces, many of which were built around the principles of Qaddafi's Green Book, a book published in 1975 setting out the political philosophy of Qaddafi, and which was intended to be required reading for all Libyans (Lutterbeck, 40, 2013). Qaddafi kept the military weak, and the army was fragmented largely due to its large size and underdevelopment. This caused parts of the military during the revolution to break off and fight against the regime, while others stuck with the regime till the very end (Lutterbeck, 41, 2013). Furthermore, Qaddafi increased the violence in other forms. He was said to have bought foreign mercenaries from sub-Saharan African countries, such as Mali, Niger, and Chad against the protestors. They were paid 500 EUR per day and an additional 9,000 EUR for every Libyan killed (Lutterbeck, 41, 2013). This extreme fragmentation was another source of conflict during the revolution.

In comparison with the other two case studies, Libya's civil society faced more barriers to entry, and once organizations were formed they faced conflict amongst each other. Certain religious organizations were allowed more freedom, which as described above had its negative impacts when certain government officials were not representative of the general population. The increase of violence in this case study is evident, from the increase in deaths and the brutal tactics of a security force helicopter unleashing fire onto protestors. The inability to communicate and collaborate sent the state into conflict, and a prolonged violent revolution.

## CONCLUSION

This paper analyzed the role civil society plays in being able to lessen the levels of revolutionary violence experienced during a revolution. The case studies of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya highlighted the importance of a strong civil society and its ability to mediate and work through conflict in order to aid in the progression of a country through a revolution.

A strong civil society can be analyzed by a citizen's ability to join an organization, and the collaboration between multiple organizations. When these two functions are met a civil society in which citizens can collaborate and exercise the power of decisionmaking is formed. This paper also acknowledges that civil society in and of itself cannot move a country through a revolution, and that there are other factors like the institutions of a state, such as the NGO laws dictating the growth of the civil society, and the military dictating the actions of civil society during the revolution. It merely advocates that a strong civil society can aid in mediating discussion throughout a revolution, leading lower levels of revolutionary violence seen. The other factors involved in moving a country through a revolution can be analyzed in future research. That being said, a more in depth analysis could be conducted to decipher where a strong civil society could in fact stand up to strong military force.

This paper followed three in depth case studies of three major countries in the Arab Spring. The research began with Tunisia, the country that started the Arab Spring and was the only country to reach a democracy coupled with the least amount of violence. It then moved onto Egypt, which highlighted how a lack of communication and collaboration between organizations can lead to long periods of conflict. Lastly, the Libyan case study emphasized the power of outside forces such as a military on a transition, which sparks interest for future research. Additionally, the paper looked at the implications of the military, as well as the policies set in place to allow or prevent a civil society to form. The connection between the laws and the civil society that formed is one of the contributions to the research on civil society and the Arab Spring.

While the impact of civil society has been studied in certain regions, there is room for further research of its global impact. One of the largest limitations in analyzing civil society on a global

perspective is how the economic, historical, and cultural developments of each region impacts its definition of civil society. It is further defined by factors such as political oppression and education. Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Africa have had different versions of civil societies. With regards to Eastern Europe, as Dauderstzdt and Gerrits argue, the strength of civil society played a large role in the successes or failures seen in Europe during its democratization. Central Europe and South Eastern Europe in particular faced multiple obstacles in their democratization which has been attributed to an underdevelopment of their civil society (Dauderstzdt and Gerrits, 2000, 361). Birle identified multiple types of civil society in Latin America, and note that while it was limited under a military dictatorship, it still held a presence (Birle, 2000, 232-234). The functions and limitations of civil society depend on the region, which is clearly evident when looking at the case of Africa. In the post-colonial phase, there was no room for civil society. Colonization left behind oppressive strategies that continue till this day. While this is a force present in the Middle East, Africa has also suffered from a long history of economic difficulty, which limits society's freedom to form a civil society (Paffenholz, 2010, 11). The idea of civil society is dependent on the society itself, however there is still much to be learnt about the coordination and collaboration between organizations from a global perspective. Additionally, a quantitative measurement of civil society would facilitate in the global analysis of civil society.

A byproduct of a strong civil society and its mediating abilities, and this in itself is not enough to topple a regime. There are other factors that contributed to the start of the Arab Spring; however, while this paper does not argue that civil society sparked the Arab Spring, it does argue that the varying levels of civil society were related to the levels of conflict experienced. This strength of civil society stems from organic organization of citizens, and not

forced organizations that the government sets in place. It is by definition, a public space where citizens can come together. Humans are naturally inclined to fight for their needs and wants, and conflict results when those are not being met. Civil society was a peaceful force during the revolutions to gather people's opinions and guide them into striving towards common goals. In countries where no civil society existed before the revolution, such as Libya, those goals were lost in the crowd of protestors, and no effective change was made. This aspect of reduced revolutionary violence can be used as a signal to other countries of the importance of civil society.

#### Works cited

Arab Spring anniversary: *When Egypt cut the internet*. (2016, January 25). Al Jazeera. Retrieved March 10, 2016, from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/01/arab-spring-anniversary-egypt-cut-internet-160125042903747.html>

Arab Spring: *An Opportunity for Greater Freedom of Association and Assembly in Tunisia and Egypt?* - Global Trends in NGO Law (Volume 3, Issue 1 - June 2011) - ICNL. (n.d.). Retrieved February 26, 2016, from <http://www.icnl.org/research/trends/trends3-1.html>

Angrist, M. P. (2013). *Understanding the Success of Mass Civic Protest in Tunisia*. Mid East J The Middle East Journal, 67(4), 547-564.

Bartlett, D. M. (2000). *Civil Society and Democracy: a Zambian Case Study*. *Journal Of Southern African Studies*, 26(3), 429-446. doi:10.1080/030570700750019655

Beinin, J. (2014). Civil Society, NGOs, and Egypt's 2011 Popular Uprising. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 113(2), 396-406.

Blanga, Y. (2014). Turmoil in Egypt – 1968–2011: the status of the armed forces in citizen uprisings in Egypt. *Contemporary Politics*, 20(3), 365-383. doi:10.1080/13569775.2014.916060

Burton, A. (1978). *Revolutionary violence: The theories*. New York: Crane, Russak.

Brownlee, J., Brownlee, J., Masoud, T. E., & Reynolds, A. (n.d.). *The Arab Spring: Pathways of repression and reform*.

Call for Investigation into Post-Revolution Deaths in Egypt. (2013, February 11). IRIN Middle East English Service. Retrieved 2016, from [http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-318294825.html?refid=easy\\_hf](http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-318294825.html?refid=easy_hf)

DAUDERSTŽDT, M., & GERRITS, A. -. (2000). Democratization after communism: progress, problems, promotion. *Internationale Politik Und Gesellschaft*, (4), 361-376.

Diamond, Larry, and Marc F. Plattner, eds. *Democratization and Authoritarianism in the Arab World*. JHU Press, 2014.

Dainotti, A., Squarcella, C., Aben, E., Claffy, K. C., Chiesa, M., Russo, M., & Pescapé, A. (2011). Analysis of country-wide internet outages caused by censorship. *Proceedings of the 2011 ACM SIGCOMM Conference on Internet Measurement Conference - IMC '11*.

Dunne, Michele. "Libya's Revolution: Do Institutions Matter?." *Current History* 110.740 (2011): 370.

Edwards, M. (2004). *Civil Society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Elbayar, K. (2005). NGO Laws in Selected Arab States. *International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law*, 7(4). Retrieved from <http://www.icnl.org/research/resources/regional/ArabStates.pdf>  
Frykberg, M. (2013). Chaos and Division Plague Libya. *Middle East*, (449), 18-19.

Eltahawy, M. (2011). Tunisia's Jasmine Revolution. *The Washington Post*. [www.washingtonpost.com. Available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/dyn/content/article/2011/01/14/AR2011011405084.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/dyn/content/article/2011/01/14/AR2011011405084.html).

Egypt severs Internet connection amid growing unrest. (2011, January 28). BBC. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-12306041>

Honwana, Alcinda. *Youth and Revolution in Tunisia*. London and New York: Zed, 2013. Print.

Howard, P. N., Agarwal, S. D., & Hussain, M. M. (n.d.). When Do States Disconnect Their Digital Networks? Regime Responses to the Political Uses of Social Media. *SSRN Electronic Journal SSRN Journal*.

"Internal Conflicts Fought." *Vision of Humanity*. Institute of Economics and Peace, n.d. Web. 14 Dec. 2015.

"Intensity of Internal Conflicts." *Vision of Humanity*. Institute of Economics and Peace, n.d. Web. 14 Dec. 2015.

Johnson, J. B., & Joslyn, R. (1986). *Political science research methods*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

- Kadhafi says Libya no place for 'civil society'. (2010, January 28). Dalje.
- Kudlenko, A. (2015). Issue-based demonstrations began in 2007 with worker's strikes. *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 23(2-3), 172-175.
- Korotayev, Andrey V., et al. "The Arab Spring: A Quantitative Analysis." *Arab Studies Quarterly* 36.2 (2014): 149-169.
- Linz, J. J., & Stepan, A. C. (1996). *Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- LOTAN, G., GRAEFF, E., ANANNY, M., GAFFNEY, D., PEARCE, I., & BOYD, D. (2011). The Revolutions Were Tweeted: Information Flows During the 2011 Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions. *International Journal Of Communication* (19328036), 51375-1405-A.
- Madrigal, A. (n.d.). The Inside Story of How Facebook Responded to Tunisian Hacks. *The Atlantic*.
- Martin, A. P. (2015). Do Tunisian Secular Civil Society Organisations demonstrate a process of democratic learning? *The Journal of North African Studies*, 20(5), 797-812.
- Mayer, A. J. (2000). *The Furies*.
- Merkel, W., and H. Lauth. (1998). Systemwechsel und Zivilgesellschaft. Welche Zivilgesellschaft braucht die Demokratie? *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 6 (7), 3-12.
- Mezghanni, S. S. (2014). Reinforcing citizenship through civil society and media partnerships: The case of community radios. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 19(5), 690.
- McQuinn, B. (2013). Assessing (In)security after the Arab Spring: The Case of Libya. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 46(4), 716-720.
- Moghadam, V. M. (2013). What is democracy? Promises and perils of the Arab Spring. *Current Sociology*, 61(4), 393-408.
- NGO Law Monitor: Egypt. (n.d.). Retrieved February 03, 2016, from <http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/egypt.html>
- NOS ALDÁS, E., & PINAZO, D. (2013). Communication and Engagement for Social Justice. *Peace Review*, 25(3), 343-348. doi:10.1080/10402659.2013.816552
- O'Kane, R. H. T. (2015). Revolutions, Revolts and Protest Movements: Focusing on Violence and Transnational Action. *Political Studies Review*, 13: 317–328.

Paffenholz, T. (2010). *Civil society & peacebuilding: A critical assessment*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Pearlman, W. (2012). *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century*. By Sharon Erickson Nepstad. *Perspectives on Politics*, 10(04), 995-998.

Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000. Print.

Rahman, Maha Abdel. "The Politics Of 'Uncivil' Society In Egypt." *Review Of African Political Economy* 29.91 (2002): 21. Business Source Complete. Web. 14 Dec. 2015.

Schewdler, Jillian. *Towards Civil Society in the Middle East*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995. Print.

Shadid, A., Bakri, N., El-Naggar, M., Kadri, R., & Kershner, I. (2011, February 19). *Clashes in Libya Worsen as Army Crushes Dissent*. New York Times. p. 1.

Steiman, D. (2012, May 29). *Military Decision-Making During the Arab Spring*. Retrieved March 10, 2016, from <http://muftah.org/military-decision-making-during-the-arab-spring/#.VuJAD5wrKhc>

The Arab Spring country by country. (2011, June 17). *The National*. Retrieved March 27, 2016, from <http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/the-arab-spring-country-by-country#full>

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL). (n.d.). Retrieved February 26, 2016, from <http://www.icnl.org/>

*Transforming Tunisia The Role of Civil Society in Tunisia's Transition*. (n.d.). Human Rights Documents Online.

Weber, Peter. "Modernity, Civil Society, And Sectarianism: The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood And The Takfir Groups." *Voluntas: International Journal Of Voluntary & Nonprofit Organizations* 24.2 (2013): 509-527. Academic Search Premier. Web. 14 Dec. 2015.

Women In Parliament. (n.d.). Retrieved February 28, 2016, from <http://www.ipu.org/english/home.htm>

Wollman, D. (2011, March 4). *Internet traffic in Libya goes dark amid upheaval*. AP Online. Retrieved 2016, from [http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1A1-968e44282474493bb09d4fea0b922450.html?refid=easy\\_hf](http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1A1-968e44282474493bb09d4fea0b922450.html?refid=easy_hf)

Weidmann, N. B. (2015). *Communication, technology, and political conflict: Introduction to the special issue*. *Journal Of Peace Research*, 52(3), 263-268.